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TALES FROM GUILFORD COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA.

BY ELSIE CLEWS PARSONS.

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In the following collection we see the art of the folk-tale in its last stage of disintegration. The tale is cut down or badly told or half

forgotten. And the narrator explains, "Lor', my gran'daddy tol' me that tale, but I hasn' thought of it for thirty years. I'se been working too hard." The intrusion of the popular anecdote (see Nos. 30, 48) and of the story drawn directly or indirectly from a literary source (see Nos. 22, 32, 45, 53, 55, 57) is another evidence of the passing of the "ol'-timey story."

Some of the tales appear to be holding their own better than others. Nos. 1, 9, 10, 25–28, 39, 49, 51, 52, 54, are very generally known. No. 21, a very interesting variant of the widespread tale of the Devil marriage, is obviously an exotic. The mere fact that the verses were sung (or, rather, chanted) proves that it was borrowed from a region where the "sing" is an important part of the tale. The elimination of the "sings" from the other tales, "sings" found in variants elsewhere, is another evidence of tale disintegration. For example: in the Bahama variants of Nos. 27, 33, 39, which I have collected, the "sings" are retained.

Between the Bahama Islands and the Carolinas there is an historical connection which may account in part for the number of tales they have, I find, in common. During the period of the Revolutionary War a number of Tories known as United Empire Loyalists migrated from the Carolinas to the Bahamas; and they took with them, of course, their household slaves. In connection with this migration, it was of interest to find that what is still current belief in the Bahamas serves as a tale in North Carolina. I refer to the magical beliefs embodied in Nos. 28, 34, 35.

Below is a list of the narrators of the tales.

1. Henry Smith. About 70. Born and bred in Ida County, North Carolina.
2. Lulu Young. About 25.
3. Carter Young. About 70. Father of Lulu, Nancy, and Katherine Young. Born in Guilford County; but he has lived in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi.
4. George Marshall. About 73. Born in Rockingham County.
5. Bill Cruse. About 68. Born and bred in Forsyth County.
6. Sam Cruse. About 30. Son of Bill Cruse. He has lived in Ohio.
7. Maude Stockton. About 30. Born and bred in Rockingham County.
8. Author, a school-girl of sixteen. Her mother dictated these tales to her. Her mother is the daughter of Margaret Burke (see No. 9, below).
9. Margaret Burke. According to her "free papers," she is 87; but she states that the papers, in order to guarantee her freedom, made her out 21 when she was only 10. Free-born of free parents. Used to live in Rockingham County. Her mother had lived in Robertson County.
10. Katherine Young. About 16. Sister of Lulu Young.
11. Lamy Tatum. About 80. Sister of Margaret Burke (No. 9).

12. Mary Dalton. About 50.
13. Mary Bunch. About 45.
14. A boy of 12 in Greensborough.
15. Nancy Young. About 15. Sister of Lulu Young (No. 2).
16. Rufus Warren. About 50.
17. John Marshall. About 40. Son of George Marshall (No. 4).
18. Jennie Tatum. About 25.

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I. (*a*) TAR BABY.[1]

De fox, in order to git de rabbit, he fixes a tar bucket to his milk-house door to ketch de rabbit when he comes in to eat his butter.[2] An' den de rabbit seen de bucket sittin' dere, an' he spoke to it. "Who's this?" An' it didn't say nothin'. An' den he said, "If you don' speak, I'll hit you." An' he hit with one foot, an' it stuck in de tar bucket. Den he hit with de oder one. An' *it* stuck. De rabbit said, "If you don' speak, I'll hit you with de oder foot; an' it is rank pison an' it will kill yer." De fox come an' said he was goin' to kill de rabbit. An' de rabbit says to de fox, "If you don' kill me, I'll pray some for yer." An' de fox tol' de rabbit he wanted to hear him pray then. An' de rabbit prayed, —

"Duck do stay in de water,
Duck do stay in de water,
Duck do stay in de water."

An' de fox said to de rabbit, "Ol' Rabbit, hush! Let me go to town to get me wife an' chil'ren, let them come hear you pray."

(*b*) IN THE BRIAR-PATCH.[3]

Once de farmer had a spring of very good water. Ev'ry mornin' he'd go to de spring, he would fin' it muddy. He had studied all day long some plan to ketch Mr. Rabbit. He would come ev'ry mornin' an' wash his face in de spring befo' de farmer could get there. So he made up his mind to play a trick on him. He made a tar baby[4] an' sot it near de spring. De nex' mornin' bright an' early Mr. Rabbit came down about de spring. He seen de tar baby, an' he did not like de looks of him. But he thought he would speak. So he said, "Good-mornin'!" An' de tar baby did not say a word. An' agin he said, "Good-mornin'!" An' de tar baby did not speak. An' he walked up close to it, an' he said, "If you don't speak to me, I will smack you in de spring." De tar baby yet hadn't spoken. An' he said, "I will tach you some manners if you have not got any." An' he drawed back his front paw an' smacked de tar baby. An' it stuck there. An' he drawed back his oder one an' smacked him. An' he said, "If you don't turn me aloose, I will kick you into de spring."

[1] Informant 1. I give titles in all cases as a matter of convenience. The narrator sometimes says a phrase or two which appears to serve him as a kind of title, but usually he starts in without this preliminary. Compare JAFL 9 : 290; Jones, IV; Harris 1 : II; MAFLS 2 : 98; MAFLS 3 : 73; this number, p. 222; Parsons, X. See Bibliography, p. 170.

[2] *Variant:* Man fixes a tar-bucket for one who is muddying his spring.

[3] Informant 2. It is not unlikely that this variant is literary. Several of my younger informants stated that they had read "Tar-Baby" in a book. For the concluding pattern see Harris 1 : IV, XII; this number, pp. 181, 225; Parsons, X (*variant*).

[4] *Variant:* Wax doll.

An' he drawed back an' kicked de tar baby with all his might. Both feet stuck there. "If you don't turn me aloose, I will bite you." An' he bit de tar baby. It was not very long befo' de farmer come down to see how his plan had worked out. He seen Mr. Rabbit stuck there fast. "Oh, yes! you're de one wha' ha' ben a-muddlin' my spring. I'm gwine to eat you fur my dinner." Mr. Rabbit begin ter baig the farmer to let him aloose, but he would not do it. Now home he got, more harder de rabbit baigged de farmer. He passed by a briar-thicket; an' de rabbit said to de farmer, "You can roast me, you ken skin me alive, but please don't throw me in de briar-thicket!" [1] De farmer thought that would be de best way to get shed of him, Mr. Rabbit, was to throw him in de briar-patch, so he throwed him as fare as he could. Just betime he taut [touched] de ground, he kicked up his heel [2] an' commenced sayin', "I was bred an' born in dis briar-patch." [3]

2. BIG FRAID AND LITTLE FRAID. [4]

Boy was afraid. When he went after de cows. Man put on a sheet to scare the boy. Monkey heard the man. He put on a sheet to scare the man. When he started to scare the boy, Monkey said, "Run, Big Fraid! Little Fraid will ketch you!" [5]

3. PLAYING DEAD TWICE IN THE ROAD. [6]

Ol' Rabbit an' Fox went a-fishin'. Ol' Rabbit he was lazy, an' he wouldn't fish none; an' ol' Fox kep' a-tellin' him he'd better fish. An' he started home, an' ol' Rabbit tol' him to give him some fish. An' de ol' fox said he wouldn't give 'em none to save his life. De ol' rabbit asked ol' Fox if he see a heap of rabbits layin' in de road, would he pick 'em up. An' he said, not 'less he see a heap of 'em. He run round den an' got in de path ahead of him, an' lay down like as he was dead. Ol' Fox he come on an' kicked him outside of de road. An' ol' Rabbit ran 'round again, an' got in de road an' lay down like he was dead. An' ol' Fox said, "Hum! I pick you up."

[1] *Variant:* Man whose milk and butter Rabbit has been eating says, "I am going to boil you an' roas' you." . . . — "Don't throw me in the briar-patch. Will scratch my eyes out."

[2] *Variant:* Say, "Kiss my foot."

[3] *Variant:* Fox said he would throw him in the briars. B'o' Rabbit said, "Dat's where I was bred an' born."

[4] Informant 3.

[5] *Variant:* Boy, seeing man and monkey on roof, said, "Dere sits big buger, little buger sittin' behin' him." Man runs. "Run, Big Buger! Little Buger ketch you!" (See p. 227.)

[6] Informant 4. Compare Harris 1 : XV; Harris 3 : XXII; MAFLS 2 : 100; Parsons, VIII.

He turned in den an' lay him on a log aside of his fish, an' goes back an' gets de oder one. When he got back again, ol' Rabbit took his fish an' was gone.

4. RABBIT MAKES FOX HIS RIDING-HORSE.[1]

De fox an' de rabbit was goin' to see de girl. An' de rabbit he got sick an' he tol' de fox he couldn't go. An' de rabbit says to de fox, "If you tote me, I ken go." — "I can't tote you." — "If you don't, I can't go, I'm so sick." An' de rabbit says, "If you take me on your back, I can go." An' de fox took him on his back; an' de rabbit says, "Fox, I'm so sick I can't stay up yer back unless I put a saddle on." An' he says to de fox, "I'll have to put a spur on my heel. I'm used to ridin' with a spur on my heel." An' de fox says to de rabbit, "When you git up into de yard, I'll stop den, an' you ken get down." An' de rabbit he stuck his spur into de fox, an' made de fox run in front of de door where de girls could see. An' de rabbit hollered out to de girls, "Girls, I told you Mr. Fox was my ridin'-horse!"

(*Second Version.*[2])

Mr. Bar an' Mr. Rabbit dey was goin' a-cortin' to see Miss Lizzy Coon. Mr. Rabbit he wanted to git in ahead of Mr. Bar; an' he went out one day, an' de garls was all dere, an' he tole de garls Mr. Bar was his ridin'-horse, an' if dey didn't believe it, nex' time he come roun' he'd show 'em.[3] So he slipped around an' went by Mr. Bar's house to see him, to set a day when dey was to go 'bout together. He went on to Mr. Bar's house dat day, an' de time he got dere he was powerful sick. He couldn't walk, he couldn't sit up, he couldn't do no way. He got after Mr. Bar, an' let him put a saddle on him to let him ride him over dere, he was so sick. He had a cowhide to ride with, an' he put a spur on too. He got on nearer to de house, an' he wanted him to git down. He said, "Jus' go a leetle farder, a leetle farder!"[4] He put de spur on him, an' rode him up to de yard an' jumped off, an' said, "Good even', ladies! I tol' you Mr. Bar was my ridin'-horse."

[1] Informant 1. Compare JAFL 25 : 285–286; Jones, VII, XIII; Harris 1 : VI; MAFLS 2 : 112–113; Parsons, XVII; Smith, 17–18.

[2] Informant 4.

[3] *Variant:* Fox an' Rabbit was courtin' one place. Talkin' 'bout Mr. Fox. "Lor' me! dat's my ridin'-horse." — "Oh, no!" says the girl. "Yes, you come down the street, an' I'll show you how it is."

[4] *Variant:* Fox and Rabbit agree to ride each other by turns. "Jes' before they get to de bars, Mr. Fox said, "Mr. Rabbit, get down! let me ride you." — "Please, Mr. Fox, let me stay on till we get through de bars." He shoved his spur in the ol' fox's side. He run de ol' fox up to de house." . . . — *Another variant:* Fox and Rabbit come to a river. "Hop on my back," says Fox to Rabbit. "Your legs short, my legs long."

5. THE RACE: RELAY TRICK.[1]

De deer an' de tarpin was goin' to run de race. An' de tarpin he gits three others besides himself, which made four, an' he placed them along his race-path. When they started to race, de tarpin an' de deer together they had such a certain distance to run. Then when they run that distance, de deer hailed to de tarpin, "Where you at now, brother Tarpin?" De tarpin says, "Here me, on ahead here!" Then when they started to run again, when they went a certain distance, de deer said again, "Where you at now, brother Tarpin?" An' de tarpin says, "Here me, on ahead here!" An' de nex' time they started agin, an' run a certain distance agin, an' de deer hailed to de tarpin agin, "Where you at now, brother Tarpin?" Tarpin said, "Here me, on ahead here!" An' dis time, de las' race, de deer says, "I must outrun dat tarpin." An' he says, "Where you at now, brother Tarpin?" An' de tarpin says, "Here me, on ahead here!" An' de deer, bein' so outrun by de tarpin, he runs to de tarpin, an' he jus' stomps de tarpin all to pieces. From that day to this a deer has no use for a tarpin.

(*Second Version.*[2])

One time dere was a rabbit an' a tarpin. Dey was goin' to run a race. De tarpin would run under de groun', while de rabbit would run on top of de groun'. Ol' Tarpin went an' put a tarpin at ev'ry pos'. Five-mile race. Ev'ry time ol' Rabbit let out, he run to his pos'. He says to Tarpin, "Wha' you?" — "Here me!" He run on to ev'ry pos'. "Wha' you?" — "Here me!" When he got his five-mile pos', he called out, "Wha' you?" — "Here me!"

6. THE RACE: SLOW BUT STEADY.[3]

Terpin made a bet. Terpin could beat the snail. Bet so many dollars. Started out. Mr. Terpin he crawled along. Night come, he had to rest. Mr. Snail crawlin' all the time, night an' day. "Mr. Snail, how you gettin' 'long?" — "You sleep, an' I keep a-pullin'. I'll beat you." Gain half a day on Terpin. "You here, Mr. Snail?" — "Yes, I here." Mr. Terpin says, "You beat me, isn't you? I expect that you so round you jus' roll downhill. I have to crawl." Mr. Terpin jumped on Snail an' tried to kill it. "I got a house on me too. You can't ketch me." Mr. Terpin killed Mr. Snail.

[1] Informant 1. Compare JAFL 9 : 290, (I) ; Jones. VII; Harris 1 : XVIII; MAFLS 3 : 69; Parsons, L; Pub. Folk-Lore Soc. 55 : XII.

[2] Informant 5.

[3] Informant 3. See this number, pp. 214, 226.

7. ABOVE THE GROUND AND UNDER THE GROUND.[1]

Devil an' a prospec' went to farmin'. Devil said he would take everything grown in the groun'; an' Prospec', out of de groun'. Plant a crop o' corn. Prospec' got all de crop, Devil didn't get nothin'. Devil said, "We'll try it again. I'll take what grows out de groun', you take what grows in de groun'." — "All right." Planted a crop of potatoes. Prospec' he got dat crop.[2] Devil said, "You can't whip me." Prospec' said, "All right, try dat. What you want me to fight with?" Devil say, "I'm going to take de foot ad [adze?], you take de peg-an'-awl." — "All right, we'll have to fight dis battle in a hogshead." [3]

8. NO TRACKS OUT.[4]

Once there was a rabbit, an' he was travellin'. Come to Mr. Fox's house. Fox call out, "Mr. Rabbit, come spend de night wi' me! Lots o' rabbits spend the night with me." — "Mr. Fox, I see lots of tracks going in, but none comin' out. So I guess I'll have to journey on."

9. IN THE CHEST.[5]

De ol' rabbit an' fox. He said to de rabbit, "I hear Dan Jones' hounds acomin'." Ol' Rabbit says, "What mus' I do?" — "You get in de chest, an' I will lock you up. Den I can run." De rabbit got in de chest, an' de fox locked him up. Put him on a kettle of water. An' set down in a corner an' commenced pettin' [patting; i.e., beating time] an' singin', —

"Rabbit good fry,
Rabbit good boiled,
Rabbit good stew,
Rabbit good any way.
I eat Mr. Rabbit."

An' he pour de water over de chest. "Gettin' hot in here," said ol' Rabbit. "Turn over an' get cool!"

(*Second Version.*[6])

De fox an' de rabbit knowed where dere was a whole lot of oranges an' apples. An' so dey made a plot to call each other an' go befo' de

[1] Informant 6. Compare JAFL 6 : 48.

[2] *Variant:* Rabbit agreed with Fox that he, Fox, would "take all what grows on top of de groun' an' I take all what grows under de groun'." That's a bargain. "I take all de 'taters an' gi' you all de vines."

[3] It was explained that the "foot ad" was a tool that had to be drawn inward, whereas the peg-an'-awl could be struck outwards.

[4] Informant 6. See this number, p. 222.

[5] Informant 2. Compare Harris 1 : XIV.

[6] Informant 7.

light come. An' de ol' fox he went oft an' left de ol' rabbit, an' got his an' come back home. Den went over to de ol' rabbit's house. Says, "I know where a whole lot of apples an' oranges is. Come on, Mr. Rabbit, an' go with me!" Went on with him home. Said, they begin to fuss an' quarrel. Said, after a while de fox says, "Mr. Rabbit, jump in my chist! a whole lot of hound-dogs is comin' after you." He got in de chist, an' de ol' fox begin' to shut de do', fastened de chist-lid down, put him a kittle of water on de fire, begin to bore holes in de chist. De rabbit would say, "What are you doin', Mr. Fox?" — "I'm goin' to give you air." Then he got his kittle of water an' begin to pour into the little cracks. The rabbit would say, —

"Chick a flea
Bitin' me."

De ol' fox say, "Turn over on de oder side."

10. PAY ME NOW.

Bout de fox an' de goose. Once de ol' fox went to de ol' goose's nest, an' said, "Mrs. Goose, I want them little baby." She said, "Please don't take my little babies! To-morrow mornin' come over soon, an' I will go with you where ol' hawg got a whole lot o' little baby-pigs." [1] An' the nex' mornin' they went. An' she got up on top of the log an' he at de do'.[2] An' de ol' dawg got after de fox, an' he run, an' call out, "I'll pay yer for it, Mis' Goose! I'll pay yer!" Ol' Goose was flyin'. An' she say, "Pay me now, pay me now!"

(*Second Version.*[3])

De rabbit tol' de fox he knowed where dere was some geese hid. An' de fox he went to git de geese. An' de dawg was in dere, an' de dawg after de fox an' chased de fox; an' he run, an' he says, "Brother Rabbit, I'll pay you for this." An' de rabbit says to de fox, "Pay me now!" De fox says, "I ain't got time to tarry here now, for de greyhounds is on behind." An' de fox he run so hard an' he run all night long, an' just at sun-up he crossed over de mountins; an' de sun lookin' so red behind de fox, he says, "I run so hard, I set dis old world on fire, an' now I'm runnin' by de light of it."

11. TALKS TOO MUCH.[4]

Man goin' along found skeleton of a man's head. "Ol' Head, how come you here?" — "Mouth brought me here. Mouth's goin'

[1] Informant 2. Compare Jacottet I : 40.

[2] *Variant:* "Mr. Fox, you stan' right here. De ol' hawg goin' come out." Ol' Fox went out his hole. De ol' goose commence peckin' on de log to scare out de hawg. De ol' dawg come.

[3] Informant 1.

[4] Informant 6. Heard in Greensborough.

to bring *you* here." He goes up to de town an' tellin' about de ol' head. A great crowd of people went with him down there. They called on this head to talk to them. The head never said nothin'. They fell on this feller an' beat him. The ol' Head turned an' said, "Didn't I tell you Mouth was goin' to bring you here?"

(*Second Version.*[1])

In slave'y time colored man travellin' 'long came to where dere was a terrapin. Terrapin spoke to him. Said, "One day you shall be free." He done him so much good, he jus' couldn' keep it. Goes up to his master's house, an' says, "A terrapin spoke to me this mornin'." An' his master say, "What did he say?" — "One day you shall be free." — "I'm goin' down here, an' if this terrapin don't talk to me, I'm goin' to whip you to death." So he called upon de terrapin, an' he went back in his house. He commence whippin' dis colored feller. He near by whipped him to death. So de ol' terrapin raised up on his legs an' says, "It's bad to talk too much."

12. DIVIDING THE SOULS.[2]

One time a colored man an' a white man out hick'ry-nut huntin'. Found big hick'ry nut an' small walnut. Lay 'em up on de gate-post. Go into de graveyard. Say, "We'll divide what we got. You take this one, an' I'll take the other." They divided all dey had in de graveyard. Then said, "We'll go up to de gate-pos' an' divide. You take the black, an' I'll take the white." Man on outside goin' along, an' he heard 'em talkin'. An' he become frighten. An' he went back to his neighbor's house where there was an ol' man had the rheumatism. An' he said, "You go with me. I'll tote you." Goes on with him, an' he says, "Jesus Christ an' the Devil is up there dividin' up the dead." An' when they got along near the gate-post says, "You take the black one, an' I'll take the white one." So he throws this white man down, an' he run off. An' the ol' man beat him back home.[3]

13. THE INSULT MIDSTREAM.[4]

De rabbit went to de river, an' he couldn't git across, an' wanted de elephant to carry him across on his back. An' de elephant said he couldn't carry him. An' de rabbit said, "If you carry me across, I'll pay you." An' de rabbit says to de elephant, "Oh, you so slow, you not get across to-night." An' de elephant says to de rabbit,

[1] Informant 6.

[2] Informant 6. See this number, p. 215.

[3] Compare this number, p. 184.

[4] Informant 1. Compare Parsons, II.

"What did you say?" Rabbit says, "Nuffin. I says good piece to de bank yet." Then, when de elephant got close enough fur de rabbit to jump off him, de rabbit jumped off, an' he says to de elephant, "You old scoundrel, you! you wouldn' get across to-night nohow."

14. WATCHER TRICKED.

Once dere was an ol' frawg an' rabbit fell out over a 'possum. An' said, de ol' rabbit an' frawg did hung (fit) [fight]. An' de ol' 'possum it clamb de tree. An' de ol' frawg said to de 'possum, "Ain't you goin' to help me out?" De ol' 'possum still staid up de tree. An' de rabbit tol' de frawg if de 'possum wouldn't come down, to watch it till he run to de house an' git de axe. De 'possum says, "Mr. Frawg, look up de tree." An' de 'possum had filled his mouth full o' tobacker. An' when de frawg looked up de tree, de 'possum spit his eyes full of 'backer-juice. So when de rabbit come, "Mr. Frawg, where is Mr. 'Possum?" So de rabbit said, "I'm goin' to kill you." So he sang back, an' oder old frawg, "I'm goin' to have your head an' guts." [1]

(*Second Version.*[2])

Said once dere was a terpin an' a frawg. De terpin lived two or three miles from de frawg's house. De ol' frawg had a knack ev'ry night of blockin' de path. De terpin was goin' to kill de frawg. So de terpin went home after his axe, an' he tol' ol' Rabbit to watch Frawg while he was gone. So de ol' frawg he jumped into de brush-pile. After a while de terpin come back. Says, "Mr. Rabbit, where is Mr. Frawg?" Says, "He's in dat brush-pile." So he hid down on de brush-pile. An' de ol' frawg jumped into a hole of water an' begin to sing, —

"You can't git me now,
You can't git me now!"

15. THE INSULT MIDSTREAM;[3] WATCHER TRICKED; MOCK FUNERAL.

Once on a time as a rabbit went on his journey. He came to river that he couldn't cross. Mr. Fox being near, and seeing his condition, said, "Get into my ear, and I will carry you across for ten dollars." Mr. Rabbit got into Mr. Fox's ear, and was carried safely across. After reaching the other side, Mr. Fox ask for his pay. Mr. Rabbit jumped out and ran into a hole near by.

After this, Mr. Fox ask Mr. Red-Bird to get a shovel to dig him out.

[1] Informant 7. See No. 15. Compare Jones, XXXVIII, XLIII; Harris 1 : X; Harris 2 : XLVII; MAFLS 2 : 115.

[2] Informant 7.

[3] Informant 8. See No. 13; also p. 233.

Mr. Red-Bird went after the shovel. While he was gone, Mr. Rabbit threw dirt in Mr. Fox's eyes. So when Mr. Red-Bird came back, Mr. Rabbit could not be found, as Mr. Fox's eyes was filled with dirt and he didn't know which way he was gone.[1] So he was deprived again of his dime.

After a period of wandering, Mr. Rabbit was asked to a party, but he would not go in. So he [Mr. Fox] was deprived of his dime once more.

Mr. Fox planned again. This time he died, and his request was that Mr. Rabbit should prepare him for his burial. But Mr. Rabbit said he never believe Mr. Fox was dead unless he turned over. So he turned over. And Mr. Rabbit ran off laughing, and saying, "I never saw a dead man turn over before." [2]

16. BRUSH-HEAP A-FIRE.[3]

Come 'long de rabbit. Seed de terpin in de brush-heap. "What are you doin' dere?" — "Waitin' fur company." Tol' him go 'long with him, he'd be company. Started along wid him. Couldn't keep up wid him. De rabbit said, "You better go back where you was." — "If I knew you was going to do this, I'd not come along." Old Turtle crawled back. "Where are you now?" — "In de brush-heap." Ol' Rabbit set de brush-heap on fire. (Done him up.) "I reckon you'll run now!" — "No, I'll crawl, I reckon." — "You'll do it mighty fas'."

17. THE SPITTING HANT.[4]

Said that a man went to camp. An' they fix the supper down before the fire. An' said there was a man come down the steps an' hawked an' spitted over his fry meat. He tol' him he better not do that any mo'. Said he hawked an' spitted again. Said the man cursed him, an' he tore him to pieces. Said the sperit tore his entrails out. An' hung him up in the joisters.

(*Second Version.*[5])

Travellin' in the country, sellin' tobacker. 'Plied at ol' school-house to stay all night. 'Long came ol' big hant — eyes equal to moons, head equal to a barrel, a tail six or seven feet long. He settin' up to de fire. An' he spit over his master's tea. Dis colored man says, "Don't you do dat no more." Chum! Spit. Nex' 'ply was, "Don't

[1] See p. 178.

[2] Compare Jones, XLVI; Harris 2 : LXII; MAFLS 3 : 76 (XV); Parsons, XLI; Pub. Folk-Lore Soc. 55 : V; Smith, 9–10.

[3] Informant 9. Compare Jones, I.

[4] Informant 2. Compare Harris 2 : LV; JAFL 13 : 26 (VII); Parsons, LXXXIX.

[5] Informant 5.

you do dat no more. I hit you sure." Chum! Colored man struck him. An' dis big hant an' the colored man ran 'round de house. His master run to de door 'cause he extra man. He called to his master to he'p him. Master replied, "He's reachin' up an' tearin' off de pieces. I can't go in." Den he went on to de neighbor's house. He called to de neighbor, "Would you go back an' he'p me?" This has been often de case — people tore up dere.

18. FIDDLING FOR THE DEVIL.[1]

Man's wife a-been a-tellin' him not to go playin' the fiddle so much. Man had been gone six months. He saw a man comin' on a nice black horse. He said he wouldn't trouble him but for two tunes. The Devil's black joke was the last tune. He come off his horse, an' he got down an' he danced it. When he danced, he give him fifty cents in money. An' that was horse-manure. When he went home, he put his hand in his pocket, an' it was nothin' but horse-manure. Devil had a club foot. "Now," said she, "you been playin' the fiddle for the Devil." An' he never went no more.

19. "FIXED." [1]

Man went to a man's house to stay all night. Man of house said, "I tell you my case." Woman was keeping his wife from having a child — fixed her. (Heap cu'ious things in de worl'.) Told him next morning what to do. Send servant to neighbor's house after fire. Somebody settin' at chimney ask, "How is the mistress?" — "Well as she could be expected of. She had a fine son." She reached up the chimney-corner an' pulled down a sack. Out popped something. She said, "God's above the Devil." When he [the servant?] got back, she did have a fine son, sure enough.

20. ALLIGATOR'S TAIL; IN THE BRIAR-PATCH.[2]

Ol' 'Possum tol' ol' Rabbit one day, if he get him a piece of ol' Alligator's tail, he'd give him forty dollars. He studied an' studied about it, an' he didn't know what to do about it. One day he came along ol' Alligator, an' dey walked an' talked an' walked an' talked an' went a long ways together. Rabbit he had a little hatchet in his overcoat-pocket, an' he chopped off alligator's tail, an' picked it up an' run with it. Alligator said, "Never mind, never mind! Match yer for it, match yer for it, if it take yer seven year!" Ol' Rabbit turned 'round. "Meet in such a field, ol' straw field, fight about it, see about it." They meet tha'. Ol' Alligator got there first. Ol' Rabbit

[1] Informant 9. [2] Informant 4. See this number, pp. 171, 225.

sot it all a-fire all 'round. They met tha'. "Match yer for it, match yer for it, if it take seven year!" Ol' Rabbit tol' him meet him in such an' such a place agin. "Fight about it, see about it." Ol' Rabbit he goes an' sets him a steel trap. Ol' Rabbit he got out tha', an' ol' Alligator says, "Please, brother Rabbit, let me out! Please, brother Rabbit, let me out!" He let him out den, an' ol' Alligator made out if he was goin' to throw ol' Rabbit in de ribber. De rabbit made out like as he wanted him to throw him in de ribber. An' he said he wouldn't throw him in the ribber, he'd throw him in de briar-patch, he wanted to punch his eyes out. He throwed him in de briar-patch. Ol' Rabbit jumped up an' said, "Dat's de very place I wanted to git a long time ago."

21. THE DEVIL MARRIAGE.[1]

One time a lady said she was never goin' to marry a man unless he was dressed in gol'. Her father had a party,[2] en a man came dressed in gol'. Somebody at the gate. Man's son ran out, car'ed him to where the ol' people were. "Look as if you was havin' some to do here." — "Yes," said the man of the house, "you better go an' take part with them." Man's daughter took man dressed in gol' for her partner. Little boy about twelve noticed him, en said, "Sister, don't you notice his feet?" — "What's wrong? Why, no!" — "Why, sister, they ain't nothin' but nubbed.[3] Notice them when he get playin'. You ask moder what's the matter wi' his feet." — "Frien', what's de matter wi' your feet?" — "I fell in the fire when I was a little feller like you, en my feet got burned off." Now his hand burned too. He said he fell in the soap-pot when he was a small boy.[4] He fixed to be married. Dat night said he mus' go home. He kyar'ed dat man's daughter back with him. She says, "You let brother go with me. I'm goin' to a strange place. I like to have some of my people goin' with me." Little boy says, "Sister, don't you notice how he done? When he got up in his buggy, he throw out an aigg. He say, 'Hop en skip. Betty, go 'long.'" Betty des flew. He went until he came to where was a great big smoke. Girl said, "Mister, what sort of a big smoke? I can't go through dat smoke." — "Oh, dat my han's burnin' off new groun'. I go en lay that smoke." — "Sister, don't you take notice what he said. 'Hop, skip, Betty,' 'till we come to this smoke. He stop Betty, he lay this smoke. Is

[1] Informant 3. Heard by my informant at Macon, Ga. Compare Jones, XXXIV; MAFLS 2 : 69; Parsons, XXIII; Pub. Folk-Lore Soc. 55 : XXXIV, L.

[2] *Variant:* Her father, the king, gave a big dance. This variant and the following were told me by Young's daughter Katherine, who had heard the tale only from her father.

[3] *Variant:* Clubbed.

[4] *Variant:* His father was making a plant-bed, and he ran through. His mother was making a pot o' lye, and he grabbed in it.

you willin' to go back home with me, sister? That ain't nothin' in de worl' but the Devil." Brother threw out an aigg, en said, "Wheel, Betty!" En Betty wheel. "Betty, go 'long! Hop en skip!" En Betty flew back home to her father. En behol'! next mornin' what should we see but the Devil comin'.[1] He went up to de gate. He says,[2] —

"Enbody here?
Enbody here?
Name Ma'y Brown
Genral Cling town."[3]

Ol' witch[4] says, —

"Somebody here,
Somebody here.
Name Ma'y Brown
Genral Cling town.

"What is whiter,
What is whiter,
Than any sheep's down
In Genral Cling town?

"Snow is whiter,
Snow is whiter,
Than any sheep's down
In Genral Cling town.

"What is greener,
What is greener,
Than any wheat growed
In Genral Cling town?

"Grass is greener,
Grass is greener,
Than any wheat growed
In Genral Cling town.

"What is bluer,
What is bluer,
Than anything down
In Genral Cling town?

"The sky is bluer,
The sky is bluer,

[1] Ol' Betty turned an' went back to his master. That man know that Betty turn up to dat lady's house an' car'ed her home. He gettin' in his cheriot an' come back as hard as he could.

[2] Young chanted the following. Obviously he had originally heard it sung.

[3] "That was hell."

[4] *Variant:* The lady brother went an' got an ol' woman who could answer that ol' man's questions. If that ol' woman couldn't have answered one of them questions, she'd [he'd] have got that girl.

Than anything down
In Genral Cling town.

"What is louder,
What is louder,
Than any horns down
In Genral Cling town?

"Thunder is louder,
Thunder is louder,
Than any horns down
In Genral Cling town." [1]

Ol' Bad Man (ol' Scratch) said he won her soul. Ol' witch taken sole off shoe en throw at him. He jumped at it en took it down.[2]

22. BLUE-BEARD.[3]

He had a big basket he car'ed on his back. He'd go to people's house an' beg fur something to eat; an' when de pretty girls would come out an' gi' him something to eat, he grabbed 'em in the basket an' run away wi' them. He had a fine large place he car'ed 'em to — to his kingdom. He gi' 'em de keys. He tol' 'em everything there belonged to them but one room. "Don't go in there." He tol' 'em the day they went in that room, they would be put to death. Married seven times, an' all was sisters. The seven wife one day, when he was gone away, she taken the keys an' looks in dat room. Finds all her sisters dead in there in a pile. She is so excited, she dropped the keys an' got them bloody. So he come back an' call for his keys. She kep' them hid from him for several days, didn' want him to see 'em. At las' she brought them out an' give them to him. He tol' her to say a prayer. She prayed seven times. An' her seven brothers came jus' as he went to kill her. An' he ran away into the woods, an' never been seen since.

23. TICKLING 'POSSUM.[4]

Coon tol' 'Possum, "Why you didn't fight?" Ol' 'Possum said Dog tickle him so he couldn't fight fur laughin'.

24. THE FROG.[5]

One time there was a lady, kind of a witch like. She took the frawg, she skinned the frawg, she stuffed the hide with wheat bran. She

[1] Compare JAFL 12 : 129, 130.

[2] *Variant:* He said, "Skip er light, Betty, an' go 'long."

[3] Informant 2. The source of this tale is not, I incline to think, literary; at least, not immediately literary. But the Young girls have many visitors, both negro and white; and the sources of their tales are various, and not to be learned with certainty.

[4] Informant 3. Compare Jones, I; Harris 1 : III.

[5] Informant 3.

sot the frawg on the hear[th] befo' the fire. An' she tol' that frawg to go where she want to stop at. An' whenever she got thar, Frawg come ameetin' of her. "I want my daughter to come whar I is." Next day say, "You come back here an' sit down whar you star' from, so I know what to do." De frawg come back, an' sot down an' said, "Meet me." Car'ed de woman, an' de frawg come jumpin' in from under de house where was goin' in.[1] Sure enough, she blessed de frawg befo' de master, an' de master shot her down in de yard.

25. WOMAN UP A TREE.[2]

Once it was a woman up a tree, an' her man (Mr. Fox) come an' waited for her. So he diggin' her grave. An' she yet hadn't come. He said, "Soon time for her to come. I wonder what's the reason she don't." Put down his shovel an' spade. He said, "I can't dig her grave to-night." An' he went away. The nex' mornin' he went to see her. An' she said, —

"I riddle um awry, I riddle tum a right,
Where did I see you las' Friday night?
When de wind did blow, my heart did ache,
To see what a hole that fox did make." [3]

26. OLD MAN ON A HUNT.[4]

A crowd of boys went out a-huntin' one night. One said to their grandfather, "Don't you want to go too?" — "No, I can't walk." Ol' man never walked. "I'll tote you." De dogs treed something. Whatever it was they treed said, "Sunday night, Monday night, Tuesday night, Wednesday night, Thursday night, Friday night, Saturday night, Sunday night, ol' Raccoon sees no rest." [5] The boys broke an' ran, an' dropped de ol' man. When they got back to de house, de ol' man was sittin' dere. "Grandpa, how did you come here?" He said, "I come in wid de dogs." [6]

[1] The only explanation I could get from those present was that the frog told the woman what to do.

[2] Informant 2. "One Moonlight Night" (FSSJ 2 : 297–299); "Mr. Fox" (Jacobs).

[3] *Second version:*
Riddle em, riddle em, riddle em right,
Where was I las' Friday night?
De wind did blow, de leaves did quake,
To see what a hole dat fox did make.

Third version:
Me riddle, me riddle, me riddle de ri',
Whar' were you las' Friday night?

Fourth version:
I sot high an' look low.
Behol', behol'! de fox dig, dig.

[4] Informant 2.

[5] *Variant:* "Poor ol' 'possum don' see no rest." This line is sometimes sung or chanted.

[6] *Variant:* "Had no more use for de rheumatism." Compare No. 12.

27. FISHING ON SUNDAY.[1]

There was a boy always made a business of going fishin' on Sunday. Mother said it was not right to go fishin' on the Sabbath day.[2] Boy said he could ketch more fish that day. Caught a fish. The fish said, —

"Clean me, Simon.[3]
Eat me, Simon.
Now lay down, Simon."

He busted open.[4]

(*Second Version.*[5])

Ol' uncle Daniel said he was an awful good fisher. An' people would tell him it was wrong. An' they went on a Sunday, an' he throwed his hook in. An' something bit his hook that could talk. An' said, "Pull me up, Daniel!" God makes a lenger hup, Daniel, huh.[6] "Carry me to de house, Daniel!" Told him, "Clean me, Daniel! Get your pot, Daniel! Go to spring, Daniel! Put me on, Daniel! I'm done, Daniel. Take me up, Daniel! Eat me up, Daniel! The last mouthful you eat, your soul shall be sudden apick[7] (go to torment).

28. THE LITTLE GIRL AND HER SNAKE.[8]

De chil' would go out an' sit in de chimney-corner to eat. Her moder axed her, "Why you go out o' de house to eat?" She said she had to go. De moder followed her. She put a spoonful of milk in her mouth an' den a spoonful in de snake mouth. De moder said dat would never do fur her chil' to eat with a snake. De chil' said, "Ive been eatin' for some time with dat snake." Her moder said, "I'm goin' to kill dat snake." — "Won't be worth while to kill dat snake, I'll die." — "No, you won't." Moder killed dat snake, an' de girl die.[9]

[1] Informant 9. Generally known. Compare MAFLS 2 : 120; Parsons, XXV.

[2] "It's sure wrong to go fishin' on Sunday," commented the narrator's daughter, a woman about fifty-five. And she told a story of how she once went and was almost "drownded."

[3] In telling this tale, a girl in another family called the boy Jacky. Her mother corrected her, saying, "Simon, my mammy said to me." In the Bahaman tale the boy is called Simon.

[4] *Variant:* "An' the fish went back to de sea."

[5] Informant 7.

[6] I was unable to get any explanation of this sentence.

[7] An expression not known to other informants.

[8] Informant 9.

[9] *Variant:* "She got de snake breat'." The belief is current in the Bahamas that if you kill the snake or the cat working witch for a person, the person will die, too.

29. THE WOMAN-HORSE.[1]

Two farmers lived close together. They didn't like each other. One farmer had a fine piece of tobacker, an' at night a great big ol' white horse would come in his field an' tear his tobacker to pieces. So he made up his mind to stop it that night. He went to de fence an' gethered him up a rail, an' sot down. An' when de horse come, an' at full speed, he knocked it backuds with the rail. It was that other man's wife he foun' layin' over the other side of the fence a-shiverin'.

30. RACING THE TRAIN.[2]

Once there was two Archman who had never seen a train. They decided they wanted to see one. They went out in the road an' lay down till the train came along. Train came along an' frightened them. An' they run along the railroad, follerin' the train. One of them left the railroad-track an' ran into the woods. The other remained on the railroad-track, an' called to him runnin' in the woods if he couldn't outrun the train on that pretty road, how could he runnin' in the woods?

31. "MAN ABOVE."[3]

Man was jealous of his wife, an' he come in one day an' ask her who had been there. An' she said, "No one." But he said, "Yes, there have, an' I'm goin' to beat you." She said, "Well, you can, but there's a man above knows all things." An' the man above said, "Yes, an' there's a man under the bed knows as much as I do."

32. THE THREE LITTLE PIGS.[4]

Ol' Fox got little Whitey an' car'ed him off one day. Nex' day he come an' got Brownie. Nex' day he come to get little Blacky. He went into his house an' shut his door. An' he could not get in. Blacky had to go to de market nex' day to buy a big dinner-pot an' some cabbage. As he was comin' home, he heard de fox in de wood comin' behin' him. He jumped in de pot an' commence rollin' down de hill so fas' he lef' de fox behin'. He run in de house an' shut de do', an' put his pot o' water on de fire. An' de fox jumped up on top of de house an' jumped down de chimney. Little Pig commence dancin' an' singin', —

[1] Informant 2.

[2] Informant 5. This story can hardly be accounted a folk-tale — as yet. I include it, however, as an illustration of the type of narrative which appears to be taking the place of the more familiar tale in North Carolina. Anecdotes about Irishmen have a distinct vogue. Indeed, the Archman has become as much of a stock character as Rabbit or Hant.

[3] Informant 5.

[4] Informant 2. Compare JAFL 9 : 290; Pub. Folk-Lore Soc. 55 : XXVI.

"Oh, my! by de hair of my chin, chin, chin,
Dat is de way to take foxes in."

33. THE WITCH SPOUSE.[1]

There was a woman who wouldn' eat like people. She would cook that man's, her husband's, dinner. He would ask her to come in an' eat. She would crumble her bread up jus' the same as a little sparrer. She had a quill she would crumble it up with, an' eat it like a sparrer. At night, when he would go to sleep, she would slip out an' dress herself an' go out to de graveyards. An' one day, when they had a buryin', he decided to watch her. That night, when she got up an' got dressed an' went out, he dressed an' went out behin'. He hid behin' a bush. She would dig up that body an' cut off slashes of 'em jus' like meat, an' eat 'em. When he seed her do that, he jus' tipped on back to de house an' get back to de bed befo' she get there. An' she came back in the night, an' got undress an' got back into the bed. He made no noise, like he never been up. An' nex' day he went to de king, her father, an' tol' him about it. An' when she got there, he got after her about it. An' she was ketchin' her husban', an' beated him half to death about it. An' she was gone, an' never was foun' any mo'.

34. OUT OF HER SKIN.[2]

Two ladies livin' togeder. Plenty to eat, dress fine. "I'm goin' off to-night." Pull off deir top garment an' pulled off deir skin. Went out by de chimney. Came back by de chimney. Said, "Hit tit, here we go!" Man in store losin' his goods. Said, "May be witch." — "No witches in this part of country." — "How you ketch 'um?" Get two pods of red pepper. Come down chimney. "Hit, tit, down we go!" One went to his [her] skin, couldn't get in. It was hot to him [her]. Started to put 'em on. "Dis is hot, sister." Said, "Skinny, don' you know me?" Skin never did speak.[3] "Lor',

[1] Informant 10. Heard by my informant from Fannie Wason of Blew's Creek. Compare Harris 3 : XI; MAFLS 2 : 7, 27, 117 (X); Parsons, XX; Pub. Folk-Lore Soc. 55 : XXIV, XLIII; JAFL 9 : 127.

[2] Informant 3. On Andros Island, Bahamas, the gist of this tale was given me as an actual occurrence. Salt and pepper were put in the disembodied skin, and the same words were said by the owner on her return: "Kinny, 'Kinny, don' you know me?" For the belief in the Leeward Islands, see Udal, J. S. (FL 26 : 281); for it elsewhere in the Southern States see JAFL 12 : 110–111; 22 : 253; this number, p. 209; for it in Guiana see p. 242 of this number.

[3] In connection with this tale the following jingles were recited by others present: —

If I jump in your skin,
I'll be your popper.

When you jump out, I jump in,
An' there'll be you agin.

You jump out, I jump in.
I'll be in my skin agin.

sister, what shall we do? Only two hours to live. Suppose some one come in." — "I'm goin' to wrap up in a sheet, keep de daylight from shinin' on us. Soon de daylight strike us, drop dead." As soon as de day light 'em, clin! one drop dead.[1] Clin! oder one drop dead.

(*Second Version.*[2])

Stealing molasses from cellar. Man watched, an' three witches came. Each said, "In an' out I go." Dropped her garments an' went into the cellar. Man kept the suits of the witches. They found out who was taking the molasses.

35. MUSTARD-SEED.[3]

Ol' witch goin' from house to house. Too much work to do in one place. People throwed mustard-seed in her way. Had to pick up one by one befo' she lef'.[4] "Here I am, where shall I hide myself?" Says, "I'll never get in a place like that again. Bes' way to carry gol' an' silver with me. I've done foun' out they can't do anything with the mustard-seed while I carry the gol' an' silver." After she got her gol' an' silver, she did go all right. Didn' have to pick up the seed. Made good time then.

36. FEASTING ON DOG.[5]

De ol' man was gone with a sack, like as he was going 'possum-huntin'. He came home, an' he said to his wife he'd get de dinner. So after they had dinner, she brushed up de scraps an' de bones, an' she called her dog Hector. "What you call Hector fur?" he said. "You done suck up his bones." [6]

(*Second Version.*[7])

Ol' woman an' man didn't have nothing to eat. She tol' him to go out an' get something. If he didn't bring home something, he couldn't lay in de bed with her dat night. He went out. He brought back something, an' he cooked it. "Dis is mighty curious meat," she said. "I eat it, but it didn't set right with me." — "You said I

[1] Compare CR 70 : 383.

[2] Informant 11.

[3] Informant 12.

[4] In the Bahamas, corn or "benny" will be poured out before the house-door or inside the haunted room to distract the "speerit" or "hant." It must be picked up grain by grain. For like belief or practice in Jamaica and in Grenada see FL 15 : 214; Bell 167. For the belief in Guiana see p. 242 of this number.

[5] Informant 13.

[6] *Variant:* "You the bigges' fool I know. Ain't you done eat Gunner, an' now you want ter feed him."

[7] Informant 9.

couldn't lay in de bed with you if I didn't bring something to eat. It is mighty curious meat. It's a dawg."

37. KEEPING PACE.[1]

The man was comin' from de mill, an' he seen a pretty white bed made up on one side de road. An' he got down offen his horse an' th'owed a rock on to de bed. An' he went on to de oder side. An' he th'owed it again. An' it rose up an' got on de horse's back behin' him. An' de horse was jus' a-runnin'. An' she says, "Lor' me! isn't we ridin' fine? I can ride as fas' as de horse can go."

38. BUGER.[2]

Was a man went to visit. Saw a little white baby on the roadside. Picked it up, an' it growed an' growed an' growed. He had to put it on his back. An' when he got home, it was a great big white woman. She said, "Take me back where you car'ed me from." It was a buger.

39. THE WITCHES AND THE DOGS.[3]

One time a woman had two little boys. They were mighty mean little boys, and she couldn't do anything with 'em, 'an she had tol' 'em she was goin' to give them to the ol' witch. One evening the witch came up, an' she tol' the witch what time she was going to send these boys to the spring. An' the witch cut [caught] the little boys an' carried them home. Put 'em in the bed. They begin to whet an' tap their knives an' say, —

> "I'll whet my knife,
> I'll tap my knife,
> I'll go through ham an' fat to-night." [4]

"Are you asleep?" [5] Little boys said, "No, not quite." — "What's de matter?" They says, "My head is not high enough." An' they fixed their heads. Again, —

> "I'll whet my knife,
> I'll tap my knife,
> I'll go through ham an' fat to-night."

"Are you asleep?" — "No, not quite." — "What's the matter?" — "I haven't got kiver [cover] enough." They began, —

[1] Informant 2. Compare this number, p. 209.

[2] Informant 10. A common synonyme for *ha'nt*, meaning "ghost" or "apparition."

[3] Informant 7. Compare Harris 3 : XI, XII; MAFLS 2 : 25 (VII), 83 (XXII); MAFLS 3 : 92; Parsons, XXX; Smith, 55–56.

[4] *Variant:* I go through fat an' lean to-night.

[5] The second syllable is emphasized and drawled out.

"I'll whet my knife,
I'll tap my knife,
I'll go through ham an' fat to-night."

"Ain't the boys sleepin' good?" one said to another. The boys had fall over a stick of wood what was under the bed. They put the stick of wood in the bed, an' they crawled under the house an' went back to the spring, an' clam' the tree. The witches passed 'em. One gets de lantern, an' de oder the axe. They found 'em up a tree. They begin to cut the tree. The little boy axed to pray.

"King Kilus,[1]
King Lovus,[1]
I'm only twenty-five[2] miles from home."

An' dey begin to cut. An' the dogs would howl. Little boy axed to pray again.

"King Kilus,
King Lovus,
I'm only a little way from home now."

An' the dogs come an' killed the witches, an' carried the little boys home.

40. FATAL IMITATION.[3]

One time an ol' rooster an' a rabbit farmin'. One day tol' de rooster ter come to de fiel' ter hoe corn. Ol' Rabbit down in de fiel'. Ol' Rooster up to de house. Ol' Rooster come back, put his head up on his wing. Ol' Rooster tol' Rabbit his wife cut off his head. Ol' Rabbit went tol' his wife, "Wife cut off my head." She said, "Oh, it will kill you." — "Cut off my head." When she got to cuttin' it off, he said, "Stop, stop!"

41. THE PUMPKIN.[4]

Tol' Jack to get de fastes' horse in de lot. He got up on de horse to go out on de plantation to drop de pum'kin-seed. He made a hole wi' de stick, dropped de seed. Horse ran as fas' as he could.

[1] Names of dogs. In one variant the dog's name is Carlo.

[2] *Variant:* Forty.

[3] Informant 14 This pattern is common among Portuguese-Negro tales I have collected from Cape Verde Islanders. See this number, pp. 226, 237.

[4] Informant 3. This tale and the following present a type whose pattern or ornament is maximum exaggeration. These two tales are instances of the same type I have found well marked in Bahama and in Cape Verde Islands tales. This type of expression appears to make a peculiar appeal to certain narrators, who indulge in it whenever the tale affords opportunity. These narrators are comparatively few.

Vine ran faster. You clim' up on top of that leaf an' holler.[1] Dat pum'kin-vine had pum'kins on it. My marster had two hawgs. Dey went away. De hawg-feeder name Jack. "Jack, we got to look for dem hawgs. Won't do to let 'em run away. Go to house, ask mistress for half a shoulder of meat, an' cook me some bread." De hawgs had eat a hole in dat pum'kin, an' staid in dere until nex' plantin'-time. From dat pum'kin-vine they build a hotel in Richmon'. Made pretties' doors an' winders you ever saw.

42. THE TURNIP.[2]

One day there was a man in this country. An' he called to de man to stay all night. His name was John. He 'plied to him, "What's your occupation?" Says, "Turnip-grower." Says he cultivated an acre of land. He put it knee-deep manure. He sowed de seed. Didn't but one come up. It growed so big that they put a fence aroun' it. It raised de fence.[3] Says, "What's your occupation?" He said, "Pottery." He was three weeks amouldin' a big pot. It wore out three-power hammer before it struck the ground. He 'plied to him, "What you better do in that big pot?" He said, "Jus' to cook that turnip in." [4]

43. THE SINGLE BALL.[5]

[I failed to record this tale. It was told me substantially as it is given in "Negro Myths from the Georgia Coast," No. XLIX, and as it was subsequently told me by a native of New Providence, Bahamas, — a white man, who had heard it in boyhood from Bahaman Negroes.]

44. AS BIG A FOOL.[6]

Man was goin' cortin', an' he tol' de girl, an' de ol' woman an' de ol' man both, he wasn't agwine to marry her.[7] He tol' 'em he'd ride

[1] Lulu Young told me about a stalk of corn that "kep' on growing. There was a squirrel up on the ear of corn. The man climb on up. It kep' growing. He had to take an' made a ladder to come back on to de groun' on."

[2] Informant 5.

[3] *Variant:* A band of soldiers come along. Come up a storm, an' they shelter under one leaf of the turnup.

[4] *Variant:* They made a barrel to cook the turnup in, — a mile long an' half a mile wide.

[5] Informant 1.

[6] Informant 4.

[7] The first incident of this familiar tale of "The Three Sillies" is omitted. It was given me by another narrator as follows: "De ol' man went out first to milk de cows. He staid so long, de ol' lady went. She staid so long, de girl went. Staid so long, de feller went. He asked them what was de matter. They said they was studyin' 'bout what ter name de firs' chil'."

three miles, an' ef he could fin' three as big a fool as they was, he'd come back an' marry her. An' he went on 'bout a mile, an' the first man he see was tryin' to pull a cow up on de house to eat the moss off the house. He axed the man what was he doin'. He said he was haulin' the cow up to eat the moss. He axed him why didn't he get up an' throw it down. "Thank you kindly, Sir Stranger, many a cow's neck I've broke tryin' to pull it up to eat the moss off my house." He went on, an' the nex' man he come across was tryin' to put on his pants. He had 'em hangin' on a tree, an' he was runnin' an' tryin' to jump in 'em. Man axed him what he was doin', an' why didn't he take 'em down an' put 'em on right. "Thank you kindly, Sir Stranger, many a time I've cracked my shins tryin' to put on my pants." He went on about a mile furder, an' seed a little boy runnin' through the house with a wheel-bar' as hard as he could go. He axed him what he war doin'. He said he was haulin' sunshine to dry the house. He went back then, an' married the girl.

(*Second Version.*[1])

In a city they was goin' to take an' cut off all de people's ears if they didn't believe in the law. If a foolish one they fin', they wouldn't cut off their ears. One man got a chain, tie his cow, got 'round on yonder side of his house, an' pulled up his cow. The king come along. What was he doin'? He said, "There a vine on top of my house, I'm pulling the cow up to eat the vine off." An' they didn't cut off their ears.

45. PLEASING EVERYBODY.[2]

Ol' man an' little boy was gwine to town one day. He was walkin', an' the little boy was ridin' a mule. An' they met a man, an' he asked why didn't they both ride. They both got on de mule, an' went on a piece. He met another man. An' he asked, "What are you doin'? Why don't you both tote that mule?" They both gathered him up then, an' tote him. They got to a bridge, an' de mule got scared an' got loose on 'em, an' jumped off an' killed hisself. Ol' man said, "Thah, now, that's what I git by tryin' to please everybody."

46. (*a*) PLAYING GODFATHER.[3]

There was a fox, a rabbit, an' a bear. They lived in a house together. They was all married. They had a large pot of lard.[4]

[1] Informant 2. Compare JAFL 12 : 109.

[2] Informant 4.

[3] Informant 15. Heard by my informant from Mary Dalton. Compare Jones, XXIV; Harris 1 : XVII; MAFLS 2: 19, 33 (XIII); Parsons, I.

[4] *Variant:* Bucket of butter in de branch. This and the following variants were given by Mary Dalton herself. See this number, p. 215.

They was all workin' in the back, an' all was goin' to dinner at twelve o'clock. An' Brother Rabbit he holler, an' say now, "Miou!" — "What's the matter, Brother Rabbit?" He say, "My wife call me." — "Well, go see what she wants." He'd go to the pot of lard an' he'd eat half of it. He says, "What did she want?" He say, "She wants name de baby." — "Whatch yer name it?" — "Sure-It's-Good." [1] He waited a while longer. He holler, "Miou!" — "Whatch yer want?" He said, "Name de baby." — "Whatch yer name it?" Said, "Half-Gone." [2] He worked a while longer. He holler, "Miou!" again. "What's de matter, Brother Rabbit?" — "Me wife callin' me." — "Go see what she want." — "What she want?" — "Name the baby." — "What did you name it?" — "Lick-de-Bottom." [3] He hadn't been gone to de house. He had eat up all the lard. They all was goin' to feast. After dey got through their work, when they went up to eat the lard, they saw it was gone. Dey axed him what had become of it. Said, "Tain't me, tain't me!"

(*b*) JUMPING OVER THE FIRE.

Terpin, Rabbit, Squirrel, Fox, all had a choppin'. Fox put the butter in the spring-house to keep it fresh. Rabbit claimed to have some of his folks sick. In the intervals of the choppin' he'd go an' get him a supply of butter. Asked how they was. He say, "No better." In a short while he went again. So he went a third time. "How are they now?" — "All gone now." At twelve o'clock ol' Fox went to de spring fer more meal. Foun' his butter licked up clean. Claimed some of them had eaten it. Ol' Rabbit fell on a plan for them to fin' who had eaten the butter. "We'll build a big fire, an' all mus' go 'round an' jump over this fire." So ol' Rabbit jumped further than any. All jumped over safe but ol' Terpin. He falls in, an' the rest says, "Pile chunks on him. He's the one who eats the butter." [4]

47. THE STEP-MOTHER.[5]

A woman had three children. She died. De man married again. Dey was mighty nice-lookin' children when der moder was alive. Den one of them looked so bad. She was taken. Anoder one looked so bad, de man went to see an ol' woman to find out from her what was the matter wid de children. They was mighty near gone. "I ain't a-going to break peace. [Said the old woman,] "You cut you five

[1] *Variant:* Beginder.

[2] *Variant:* Half-Way.

[3] Scrape-Bottom.

[4] Informant 16. Compare Harris 1 : XVII; Harris 2 : XLII.

[5] Informant 9.

switches. An' you go to de house 'fore de horn blows for dinner, an' set in the chimney-corner." [1] She greased one of them on mouth and hands, like dey had eat.[2] She wasn't puttin' a thing in them. "If you tell your daddy dat you don't eat your dinner, I'll kill you." She took another one of de children, an' when she was greasin' it, he came in. De children told de people deir moder throw dirt in de pan in de play-house for' em to eat. He took his switches an' whipped his live wife. His children lived an' was the same after dat.

48. THE BEST PLACE.[3]

There was an ol' man, an' he had a wife, an' she was always fussin'. One day she said to him, "I wish I was in heaven!" — "I wish I was in de still-house!" he said. "You always did wish to be in de best place."

49. WOMAN ON HOUSE-TOP.[4]

Man asked her would she have anything that she found in her sack. She must go up on top of de house an' stay there. "I'll have a young man in de mornin'." She done froze. De man was in de sack. He was goin' to have her, but she was done dead.

(*Second Version.*[5])

Ol' lady wanted to marry. Devilish young boys put a wet sheet aroun' her. She went out on top of de house, takin' her seat up dere. Said, awful cold. De owl cried, "Huh, huh! Huh are you?" She answered, "Anybody, Lord, jus' so it's a man."

50. THE TALKING BONES.[6]

Said once a man was going off to take off tobacker. It was sleetin' an' snowin'. He come to an old house an' took out de mules for a camp. Said dere was bones in de house. An' de owner of the house told him if he would go an' take one of dem bones, he would give him a whole lot of money. He begin to pick up de bones. Some one said, "Don't take dat one, that bone is mine." [7] Another said, "Don't take dat bone, that bone's mine." An' he picked up anoder one an' started to run, an' something tore him all to pieces.

[1] This was outside.

[2] It seems to have been a notorious trick for a niggardly mistress to get a meat-skin from the smoke-house and grease the mouths of her child slaves whenever she expected company.

[3] Informant 17.

[4] Informant 9.

[5] Informant 18.

[6] Informant 7.

[7] Said in high-pitched, shrill, squeaking voice.

51. THE HAUNTED HOUSE.[1]

Come along a woman with three children. She met a man. "Could I stay all night at your house?" Three miles from here he had a house. "You're welcome to go. If you stay all night and tell me in the morning, I give you the house. You'll see things. You can't stay there." Gave her a light, a flat lamp with a rag put in it. She found dat house just like people had left it. She fed de children. After a while something made a fuss. She kept a-readin' de Bible. Do' came open, a man came in.[2] Looked as if he was wrapped in a sheet. "In the name of the Father, the Son, an' the Holy Ghost, what do you want here?" She said dat three times. Then he spoke. "You light your light sufficient an' go with me in the cellar. You take a knife an' a fork. Do what I tell you, an' I'll 'pear no more." He showed her what to stick de knife at, an' what to stick de fork. "Next morning you 'quire for de three brothers an' sister, an' go in an' find dis fork an' knife sticking up in de cellar. You'll find a pot of money, an' divide it up wit dese people. I'll 'pear no more." De man who owned de house give her de place. My mammy said her mammy knowed it was so, an' told her about it.

52. THE BLACK CAT.[3]

A man had a house an' lot. He'd give it to any man who'd go an' stay all night. An' one ol' black man said he could stay dere. An' he took his Bible an' his light, an' sot down dah an' went to readin'. An' he looked 'round, an' da sat an ol' black cat aside of him. De ol' black cat said, "Dere's nobody here but I an' you to-night." He said, "Dere'd be nobody here but you directly, neither."[4] He broke out an' run, an' got powerful tired, an' sat down on a log to rest; an' he looked around, an' dah sat de ol' black cat again. An' he said, "Dat was a right good race we had up here." An' he [the man] said, "We're goin' to have anoder one too."[5]

[1] Informant 9.

[2] *Variant:* Down came a foot. Down came a leg. Down another leg. Down a body. Down his head. All jined up.

[3] Informant 4. See p. 224 (No. 7).

[4] *Variant:* Something came an' put out his candle. Thing said, "Seem to be two o' us here to-night." Man said, "Won't be long won't be but one." — *Another variant:* Man taken off his shoes. Something come an' says, "Tain't nobody taken off his shoes but you an' me to-night." Man putten on his shoes. Man says, "Yes, an' in a few minutes I'll have mine on."

[5] *Variant:* An' he came to a fence an' stop to rest. An' the hant [in the shape of a person] says to him, "We had a powerful race, didn't we?" An' he says to him, "Yes, an' if you wait a minute, we'll have another one." — *Another variant:* He put out as hard as he could rip runnin'. Says, "Ain't nobody runnin' but me an' you ternight." He lit out again an' runnin'. Then he sot down an' res'. Said, "We sure have taken a good rest." The man say, "Yes, an' I'm goin' to take anoder one."

53. SELF-CONFIDENCE.[1]

Ol' Tarpin started to cross the road. One of his neighbors saw him a week a-crossin'. Tree fell jus' as he got across. He said, "Ain't it well to be pyrt!" [2]

54. THE WOMAN-CAT.[3]

Der was a man owned a mill, an' he couldn't stay at it late. Something would run him away.[4] One day an ol' traveller[5] come along, an' asked him what would he give him to stay dere dat night. He said he would give him mos' anything if he would stay. So he went in, an' takin' his book, his Bible, an' surd, an' sat down an' kimminced a-readin'. It was eight or nine cats[6] came in 'rectly after dark, an' staid there until gettin' late. An' one of them made a drive at de man, an' he up with his surd an' cut his right front foot off. An' dey all left then. Nex' mornin' he went up to de house fur breakfast. An' de miller he was gettin' breakfas'. His wife was not able.[7] He wanted to know what was de trouble. He said she was cuttin' a ham-bone in two an' hurt her han'. He showed the man a ring, an' asked him would he own it. He said he would. He said that was his wife ring he bought him [her] befo' dey was married. So they went in de room an' asked her was dat her ring. She said it was not. Then they looked, an' her right han' was cut off at de wrist.

55. THE MURDEROUS MOTHER.[8]

An ol' man caught a 'possum, an' carried it home for his wife. An' she put it on an' baked it. An' she kept a tastin' until she eat it all up.[9] An' she had a little boy name Finlay. An' she said, "If I give yo a piece of butter an' bread, can I kill you?" — "No'm." — "Say 'yes,' Finlay." She cut his head off an' his fingers, an' put his head in de bed, an' his fingers on de stone. An' de ol' man come. An' de bird flew in his do'. Says, "Wonder where is po' little Finlay!"

[1] Informant 12.

[2] Pert, meaning lively.

[3] Informant 2.

[4] *Variant:* She turn to a horse an' run the men away from the mill.

[5] *Variant:* Preacher.

[6] *Variant:* First came in was a white cat. Taken seat up there beside the man. Nex' was a yaller cat. The white cat said, "Come in, pussy, like I had to do." The yaller cat was taken a seat. Nex' was a black cat. "Come in, pussy, like I had to do." . . . — *Another variant:* Something like a rabbit.

[7] *Variant:* "My wife in bed." — "Get her up." Got her up. She was out of her skin. It was jus' like a beef. — *Another variant:* She had shoes on her hands, like a horse. He took and killed her.

[8] Informant 7. Compare MAFLS 2 : 61, 75.

For this opening cf. "The Milk-White Doo" (Chambers, p. 49).

"Just look on de bed, you'll find his head.
Look on de stone, you'll find his fingers."

Then the ol' man prayed, "Drap a little marble stone." There dropped a stone an' killed the ol' lady.[1]

(*Second Version.*[2])

De mother cooked a 'possum, an' she kept a tastin' it till she ate it all up. Then she takin' her little girl an' cut her head off an' cooked her. An' ol' par't [parrot] he would say, "Where's little Nellie? Where's little Nellie?" She would shoo him off. An' when her husban' come at dinner, he wanted to know where was the baby. She says she eat her dinner an' gone to sleep. An' ol' par't would come an' say, "Where's little Nellie?" He said, —

"Little Nellie is dead.
Look in de bed,
An' you'll see her head."

An' he looked an' found her head. He take it an' put her in a barrel, poured lamp-oil over her, an' drove spikes, sot it a-fire, an' rolled her off down the hill.

(*Third Version.*[2])

"If I give you a lump of sugar as big as my fist, can I kill you?" De chil' said, "Yes." She took it out to de chop-block, an' she laid it on de block an' she chopped off its head. De fader came home. De moder cooked her, an' gave her to de fader to eat. De speerit came an' said,

"My mother killed me.
My father ate me.
My brothers buried my bone
Under a marble stone."

56. THE CAT WHO WANTED SHOES.[2]

Once dere was a man named Tom Conder. It was a great large cat come in his house, an' staid for twelve months. He got ready to go to town with some 'backer. An' de cat said to him, "I want you to bring me back a pair of shoes. If you don't, I will destroy your wife an' childrun while you gone." So he promised her he would. He tol' some fellows about de cat talkin'. Dey said it was a witch, an' fur him to bring it off de nex' day, an' they would meet him an' kill it. An' so he gethered it up to carry it to town to get a shoe. When he met 'em, they wanted to know what he had in his sack.

[1] Another stone dropped, but what it did the informant forgets.

[2] Informant 2.

One said, "Have you got liquor?" An' he said, "No." Then the oder jerked de sack off his back, an' out jumped de cat, an' de dogs ran in behind it.

57. STRAW INTO GOLD.[1]

Once dere was a queen married a c'uel man. He would put a lot of straws down an' tell her to turn 'em into gold by de time he get back. One day she was a grievin' because she could not turn 'em into gold. An' a ol' man come along an' axed her why does she weep, kind miss. "Because I cannot turn those straws into gold." An' he said, "I will turn 'em into gold fur you if you will give me your first chil'." An' he did. An' he come again fur de chil'. She did not recep [?] to him to take de chil' jus' den. An' he said, "If you will tell me my name, I will not take it." Another man come an' tol' her to write down all de dead an' all de livin' people names. An' she did. One day ol' man was a-huntin'. He seen a little cabin in de forest. He heard a noise. He went close an' listened, an' he heard an ol' man singin', —

"To-day I was buried,
To-morrow I was brew.
And then for de queen chil'
I shall take.
I'm so glad then she do not know
That my name is Tambutoe."

He went back to take de chil'. She said, "You go away, ol' Tambutoe!"

58. THREE-EYES.[2]

Once a woman had three children. She was sendin' to mind de cow in de bottom. She would stick a pin in her sister's ear an' put her to sleep. An' then she would take a little red switch an whup on de ground, an' fix a nice table fur dinner. Then she would wake up her sister, an' they would eat. Her mother sent de three-eyed girl one day to watch um. She taken an' stickin a pin in the three-eyed girl's head; an' two eyes went to sleep, an' one eye watched her an' seed how she fixed her lunch.

59. THE FROG WHO WOULD FLY.[3]

Once there was a frog that wished to fly. So some ducks decided to carry the frog. The ducks got a stick, and told the frog to take

[1] Informant 2. Compare Smith, 20–24.

[2] Informant 2.

[3] Informant 7. This tale is a variant, I surmise, of a tale I found common among the Cape Verde Islanders, in which the birds lend their feathers and take them back again. The tale is also known to the Pueblo Indians. The only other American variant of the tale I have found is from Jamaica (Pub. Folk-Lore Soc. 55 : XL).

hold of it in the middle with his mouth. The ducks took hold of the stick at each end. They went flying up in the air with the frog. They got up in the air, and met a gang of birds; and they said, "What a beautiful frog!" And the frog began to swell. "What a beautiful frog!" The frog swelled. And went to open his mouth to speak a word to the birds, and opened his mouth and turned the stick aloose, and fell to the ground and bursted himself open.

60. BRAVE FOLKS.[1]

Man an' his wife livin' in a small log-cabin. One day settin' by the fire. A big bear walked in. So dis man he become frighten. He jumped upstairs. He was settin' up there, lookin' at his wife kill this bear. After she killed him, then he says, "What brave folks are we!"

61. THE ADULTERESS.[2]

While de man was gone from home, anoder man come and get in de bed. This man come home, an' said, —

"Ol' lady, ol' lady, what's dat tied out dar?" —
"You fool, you fool! you blin' as you can be.
It is nothing but a milch-cow my mother sent to me." —
"I been here, I been here, forty years or more,
I never seen a milch-cow with saddle on before.

"Ol' lady, ol' lady, what's dat on de floor?" —
"You fool, you fool! you blin' as you can be.
It is nothing but a churn my mother sent to me." —
"I been here, I been here, forty years or more,
I never saw a churn with heel-tops on before.

"Ol' lady, ol' lady, what's dat hangin' up?" —
"You fool, you fool! you blin' as you can be.
It is nothing but a strainer my mother sent to me." —
"I been here, I been here, forty years or more,
I never saw a strainer with a brim on it before.

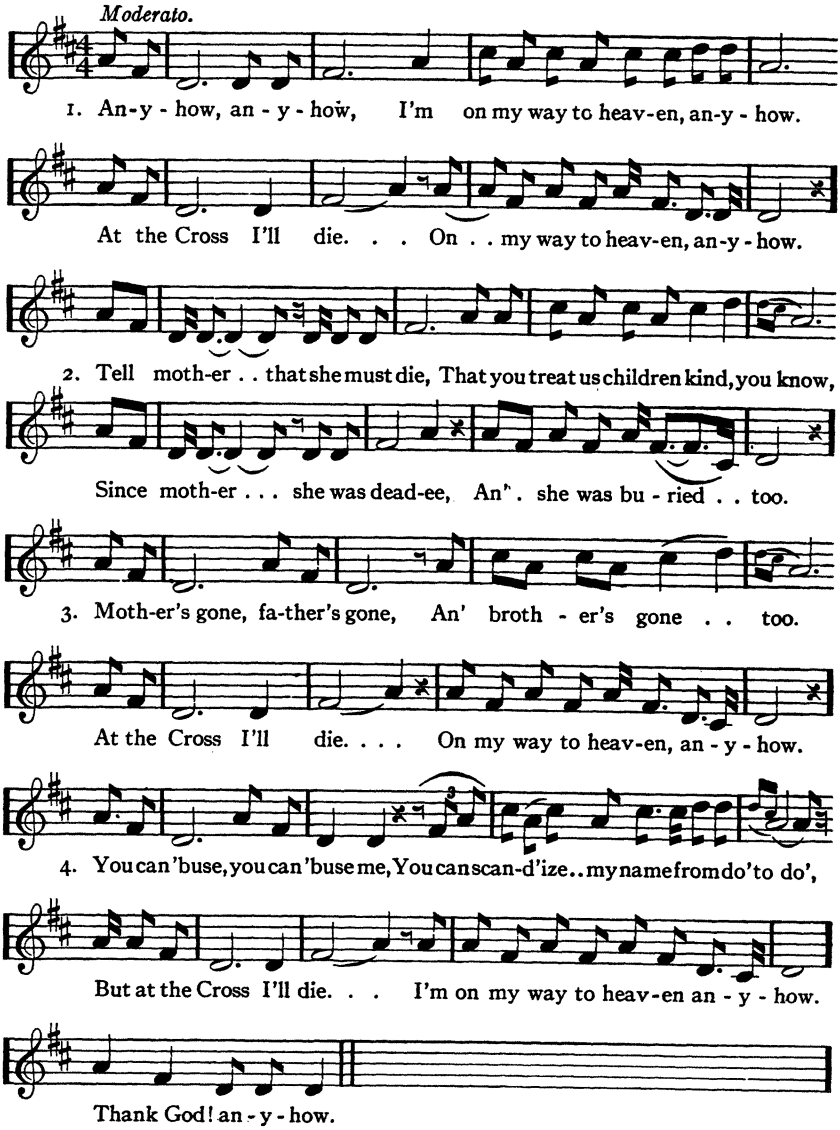
"Ol' lady, ol' lady, what's dat in de bed?" —
"You fool, you fool! you blin' as you can be.
It is nothing but a baby my mother sent to me." —
"I been here, I been here, forty years or more,
I never saw a baby with a mustache on before."

[1] Informant 6.

[2] Informant 7. Neither my informant nor a much older woman who knew this fragment of the ballad of "Our Gude Man Came Hame at E'en" had any knowledge of its being sung. On Andros Island, Bahamas, it is still sung.

62. ANYHOW.[1]

Once dere was three little children. Their mother had died. An' de people around had told de moder before she died dey'd treat her children kind. An' said, one day after de moder was buried, de children would go to some of de people round's house, an' said 'last de people drove 'ém from de do' an' said de little children made a song: —



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[1] Informant 7. The framing of this "spiritual" with narrative has a comparative interest for the student of the cante-fable in the Bahamas and elsewhere.